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Alberta's

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Apprenticeship

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System

A MODEL OF EXCELLENCE



*Excellence Through
Training and Experience*

Alberta

ADVANCED EDUCATION AND
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

ALBERTA'S APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

A Model of Excellence

OVERVIEW

ALBERTA'S APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM:

A Model of Excellence

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ALBERTA'S APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM:

A Model of Excellence

O V E R V I E W

Apprenticeship is a training system that combines on-the-job training and formal instruction in recognized sets of skills called trades. The Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act and the regulations under the Act provide the legislative authority for the administration of apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship is a formal, contractual relationship between an employer and an employee. When a Contract of Apprenticeship is signed by the employer and employee and the contract is registered with the Alberta provincial government's department of Advanced Education and Career Development, the employee becomes an apprentice.

Advanced Education and Career Development administers the apprenticeship system and arranges with training establishments to provide the formal instruction component of apprenticeship training.

Employers and employees provide direction to the apprenticeship system through the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board, and through committees that make recommendations to the board: the Provincial Apprenticeship Committees and the Local Apprenticeship Committees.

The information contained in this booklet was developed to complement the 1993 video *Alberta's Apprenticeship System: A Model of Excellence*. Suggestions for delivering presentations about the apprenticeship system, based on information in this booklet, start on page 18.

More information about the apprenticeship system in Alberta can be obtained by calling any Alberta Career Development Centre.

✓ apprenticeship system

✓ partnership: apprentice and employer

✓ partnership: department and industry

What is the apprenticeship system?

Historically, apprenticeship training was a partnership between two people. Apprenticeship meant that an employer hired and indentured an apprentice. The employer was obligated to teach the knowledge and skills of the trade to the apprentice.

While this basic relationship continues, in Alberta the apprenticeship system is a partnership among many individuals, businesses, and groups:

- the apprentice
- the journeyman
- the employer
- Advanced Education and Career Development (the department)
- Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (the board)
- Provincial Apprenticeship Committees (PACs)
- Local Apprenticeship Committees (LACs)
- the training establishments.

The employer and apprentice partnership is a very visible part of the Alberta apprenticeship system. In this partnership the employer, through a journeyman, provides the majority of the training to the apprentice; the apprentice learns the skills of the trade. To support this partnership, the department acts as the registrar, the advisor, and the monitor, and arranges formal instruction through training establishments.

The partnership between the department and representatives of industry is a very important part of the apprenticeship system. Industry is represented by employers and employees.

Employers and employees know what specific skills are needed in the trade, what are effective and safe working practices, and how to keep current with technological change in the trade. They are nominated to represent industry, and to sit as members of the board, the PACs, and the LACs. The board makes recommendations about apprenticeship to the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development. The board relies on the PACs and the LACs for input to its recommendations. In this partnership the department provides support to industry.

What is an apprentice?

A person who is learning a trade and has an apprenticeship contract that is registered with the Alberta government is called an apprentice. An apprentice learns a trade from a journeyman. In 1992 there were more than 20,000 apprentices in Alberta.

What is a journeyman?

A journeyman is someone who has learned the skills of the trade. A journeyman may or may not hold a Journeyman Certificate. The Journeyman Certificate indicates that the holder has met certain standards and has learned the skills of the trade. About 7% of the Alberta labour force, or 85,000 individuals, hold Journeyman Certificates. In optional certification trades, if the journeyman does not hold a Journeyman Certificate, he or she may be recognized by the employer as having the skills of a person who does have a certificate.

How does apprenticeship work?

An apprentice and an employer sign a Contract of Apprenticeship, and have the contract registered with Advanced Education and Career Development. The apprentice agrees to learn the skills of the trade. The employer agrees to provide the apprentice with the on-the-job training.

Apprenticeship is compulsory when learning a trade. A trade has formal and regulated apprenticeship training. Training is monitored.

✓ apprentice

✓ journeyman

✓ contract of apprenticeship

✓ compulsory

✓ training

✓ period of training

About 80% of the apprentice's training takes place on the job. The other 20% of the training is formal instruction at training establishments. The department arranges with the training establishments to provide the formal instruction.

Apprenticeship training programs run for up to four periods of training. A period of training usually has two components: for each trade, a specific number of hours of on-the-job training and a set amount of formal instruction. The amount of formal instruction ranges from four to 12 weeks per period. Most apprenticeships last three to four years or longer.

What are the trades?

There are more than 50 trades in Alberta. The trades fall into two categories, compulsory certification trades and optional certification trades:

- In compulsory certification trades an individual must hold a Journeyman Certificate or be an apprentice to work in these trades
- In optional certification trades an individual does not require a Journeyman Certificate to work in the trade. The individual can be recognized by an employer as having the skills of a journeyman. To learn an optional certification trade, an individual must be an apprentice.

Compulsory Trades

Appliance Serviceman
Auto Body Mechanic
Boilermaker
Crane & Hoisting
Equipment Operator
Electrician
Electronic Technician
Elevator Constructor
Gasfitter
Hairstylist
Heavy Duty Mechanic
Ironworker
Motorcycle Mechanic
Motor Mechanic
Plumber
Recreation Vehicle Mechanic
Refrigeration and Air
Conditioning Mechanic
Sheet Metal Worker
Steamfitter-Pipefitter
Welder

Optional Trades

Agricultural Mechanic
Baker
Bricklayer
Cabinetmaker
Carpenter
Cement Finisher
Communication Electrician
Cook
Electrical Rewind Mechanic
Floorcovering Installer
Glassworker
Instrument Mechanic
Insulator
Landscape Gardener
Lather-Interior Systems
Mechanic
Locksmith
Machinist
Millwright
Painter and Decorator
Partsman
Plasterer
Power Lineman
Power System Electrician
Printing and Graphic Arts
Craftsman
Projectionist
Roofer
Sawfiler
Sprinkler Systems Installer
Structural Steel and
Plate Fitter
Tilesetter
Tool and Die Maker
Transport Refrigeration
Mechanic
Water Well Driller

✓ compulsory certification trades

✓ optional certification trades

✓ designating a trade

✓ entry to trades

✓ apprentice wages

How does a set of skills become a designated trade?

The process of designation is usually initiated by an industry application to the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development. The Minister, Cabinet, and industry - through participation on a provisional committee - define what should be included in a designated trade, and set the standards and regulations for the trade. They also define the training that will be provided in the trade, and indicate how the training will be done. Cabinet, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor, designates either a compulsory or an optional certification trade.

Once a trade is designated, a Provincial Apprenticeship Committee for that trade is established by the board.

How does an individual become an apprentice?

The individual must be hired by an employer who is eligible to train an apprentice. The potential apprentice must then fill in an apprenticeship application form.

The minimum education necessary to enter a trade ranges from Grade nine to 11 depending on the trade. Many employers prefer to hire someone with a Grade 12 education.

An entrance examination may be written if educational requirements are not met. In some trades (such as instrument mechanic) an entrance exam is required.

How much does an apprentice earn?

Apprentices earn a percentage of the journeyman wage in their trade at the company in which they are employed. The apprentice's wage varies from 50% to 90% of the journeyman's wage, depending upon the trade and depending upon how much training the apprentice has completed.

How does an apprentice progress through the training?

To progress from one period of apprenticeship training to the next, the apprentice will:

- successfully complete the formal instruction
- have the required hours of on-the-job training
- pass the apprenticeship examination for that period of training.

The employer will:

- update the apprentice's record book by recording the on-the-job training provided, the hours worked, the type of work performed, and by evaluating the apprentice
- forward the record book to the nearest Career Development Centre, Advanced Education and Career Development.

After completing these steps the apprentice's wages should increase to the next level for that trade. The amount of the wages may differ with each employer.

How does an apprentice obtain an Alberta Journeyman Certificate?

An Alberta Journeyman Certificate is granted to an apprentice who:

- acquires the required number of hours of on-the-job training
- successfully completes the formal instruction
- passes all required examinations.

When the apprentice receives the Alberta Journeyman Certificate, he or she qualifies to use the term "certified" with the name of the trade. This title lets employers and consumers know that a standard of quality or skill, as established by industry, has been attained. He or she will now be paid journeyman's wages.

Where can the journeyman work?

The Alberta Journeyman Certificate is valid in the province of Alberta, and may be useful in other provinces and countries. If the journeyman holds a certificate in one of the Interprovincial Standards trades

✓ progression

✓ Alberta Journeyman Certificate

✓ certified

✓ work location

✓ employer eligibility

✓ employer responsibilities

✓ apprentice responsibilities

and is interested in working in another province, the journeyman can write an Interprovincial Standards Program (Red Seal) exam. Journeymen who carry an Interprovincial Standards Program Red Seal on their provincial certificate are qualified to work in their trade anywhere in Canada that the designation is recognized.

Who is an eligible employer?

An employer is eligible to train an apprentice if the employer:

- is a journeyman or employs a journeyman who is eligible to provide training and supervision to an apprentice in a particular trade.

What are the responsibilities of the employer?

The employer is responsible for:

- providing on-the-job training to the apprentice under the supervision of a journeyman
- paying the apprentice wages, between 50% and 90% of the company's journeyman wage rate depending upon the trade and depending on the amount of training the apprentice has completed
- sending the apprentice for the required formal instruction
- maintaining the apprentice's record book.

What are the responsibilities of the apprentice?

The apprentice is responsible for:

- completing the required on-the-job training as assigned by the employer
- meeting any additional training requirements relating to the trade that are assigned by the employer or the LAC
- attending the required formal instruction
- making arrangements to meet his or her financial needs while attending formal instruction
- acquiring the text books and supplies that are required for formal instruction
- successfully completing the requirements of the formal instruction, the examinations required by the board, and the term of apprenticeship

- at the completion of each period of apprenticeship, reviewing with his or her supervisor:
 - the hours that were worked
 - the on-the-job training that was completed, and then ensuring that the record book is updated and is forwarded to the department
- advising the department if he or she becomes unemployed or employed by another person so that the contract of apprenticeship can be transferred
- notifying the department of a change in his or her address or in his or her employment
- carrying his or her apprentice's identification card at all times while at work and producing it on request.

Where does apprenticeship formal instruction take place?

Formal instruction is delivered at a variety of training establishments, depending on the trade:

- technical institutes, such as Northern Alberta Institute of Technology or Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
- colleges, such as Red Deer College
- Alberta Vocational Colleges, such as Lesser Slave Lake
- private trade schools, such as Marvel Beauty College
- industry training centres, such as TransAlta Utility School
- out of the province, such as British Columbia Institute of Technology for the Sawfiler trade.

How are apprentices assigned seats at formal instruction?

Each May the department sends class selection cards to the employer of an eligible apprentice. The employer is asked to complete the card and indicate first, second and third preferences for the apprentice's class start dates. If an apprentice is unemployed, the selection card is sent to the apprentice for completion.

✓ formal instruction locations

✓ notification of formal instruction

✓ class start date

✓ notification of class start date

✓ cost of training

In June the department assigns a class start date to each apprentice whose class selection card has been returned. The department assigns classes according to the date the apprentice is expected to complete his or her period of training, and according to the employer's preference, if possible.

If an apprentice's class selection card has not been returned the apprentice is assigned to a remaining space, or placed on a wait list.

How does the apprentice know when to attend formal instruction?

In July the department sends a letter to each apprentice and to each employer indicating the apprentice's class assignment. About eight weeks before the class start date the department mails another letter to the apprentice and asks the apprentice to confirm his or her intent to attend the class. The department also sends a letter to the employer that confirms the apprentice's class assignment.

How much does apprenticeship training cost?

The formal instruction is paid for by the provincial and federal governments. The apprentice pays for the textbook and other classroom materials he or she needs. During formal instruction the apprentice may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits or for a Government of Canada training allowance.

What is the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board?

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board is a government appointed board. The board's primary function is to advise the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development on labour market matters related to the training and certification of persons in designated trades and occupations.

The board has 13 members: a presiding officer, eight members who represent trades and four members who represent other industries. The eight trade and four other members represent employers and employees in equal numbers. The members must be knowledgeable about the needs of the Alberta labour market and the training and certification of people in the trades and occupations.

In advising the Minister, the board draws upon the expertise of Provincial Apprenticeship Committees.

How are board members appointed?

Members of the board are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister. Members are appointed for a term up to three years, and may serve two terms only.

What are the responsibilities of the board?

The board makes recommendations to the Minister about:

- the needs of the Alberta labour market for skilled and trained workers
- the training and certification of persons in trades or occupations
- the designation, change of designation, or rescinding of designation of trades and occupations.

✓ Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (the board)

✓ board membership

✓ appointment of board members

✓ responsibilities of the board

The board also:

- recognizes apprenticeship programs, student work training, work experience and training programs
- develops policies about recognizing training as equivalent to training provided under the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act
- with the Minister's approval, makes regulations about designated trades and designated occupations
- appoints members to the Local Apprenticeship Committees and to the Provincial Apprenticeship Committees
- provides the Minister with an annual report summarizing the affairs of the board for that government fiscal year. This report is then presented to the Legislative Assembly by the Minister.

What are the Provincial Apprenticeship Committees?

Each trade has a Provincial Apprenticeship Committee (PAC).

Each PAC can have a minimum of nine and a maximum of 21 members. Each PAC must have a presiding officer, and members who represent employers and employees in equal numbers.

How are PAC members appointed?

PAC members are appointed by the board for a term not exceeding three years. The board accepts nominations for membership from industry, and from individuals who nominate themselves. The Minister appoints a government employee as secretary to each PAC.

Who can be a PAC member?

PAC members are expected to be associated with and knowledgeable about the designated trade. A PAC member may also be an LAC member.

PAC members:

- make recommendations about apprenticeship training
- promote apprenticeship
- attend meetings to represent those who work in the trade
- follow good apprenticeship training practices themselves
- are knowledgeable about the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act and Regulations.

✓ Provincial Apprenticeship Committees (PACs)

✓ PAC membership

✓ appointment of PAC members

✓ expectations of PAC members

✓ responsibilities of PACs

What are the responsibilities of the PACs?

The PACs are responsible for setting the training needs and standards in their respective trades.

The PACs:

- identify the training needs and content for their trade
- recommend the standards for training and certification for their trade, and forward their recommendations to the board
- monitor the activities of the Local Apprenticeship Committees in their trade
- make recommendations to the board regarding the designation, changing the designation or rescinding the designation of trades, occupations and regulations under the Act
- determine whether training provided by persons or organizations other than the Minister is equivalent to training provided in an apprenticeship program in its trade
- may participate in resolving any apprenticeship related disputes between employers and employees.

What are Local Apprenticeship Committees?

Most of the trades in Alberta have a network of Local Apprenticeship Committees (LACs). An LAC is established by the board in an area of the province where there is sufficient interest in the trade to warrant it.

LACs have a minimum of five members, with a presiding officer, and members who represent employees and employers in equal numbers. LAC members are appointed for a term of up to three years.

How are LAC members appointed?

The board accepts nominations for membership from industry, and from individuals who nominate themselves.

Who can be an LAC member?

LAC members are expected to:

- be associated with and knowledgeable about the designated trade
- work in the designated trade, or employ others who work in the designated trade, or be engaged by an organization that represents others who work in the designated trade, in the area for which the local apprenticeship committee is established.

LAC members:

- make recommendations about apprenticeship training
- promote apprenticeship
- attend meetings to represent those who work in the trade
- follow good apprenticeship training practices themselves
- are knowledgeable about the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act and Regulations.

✓ Local Apprenticeship Committees (LACs)

✓ LAC membership

✓ appointment of LAC members

✓ expectations of LAC members

✓ responsibilities of LACs

What are the responsibilities of the LACs?

LACs are the local link to the PACs and are responsible for monitoring apprenticeship training and resolving disputes between employers and apprentices in the LACs geographic area.

The LACs:

- monitor apprenticeship programs and the progress of apprentices in their trade
- make recommendations about apprenticeship and certification to the PAC for their trade
- make recommendations to the board for appointment of members to the PAC for their trade
- participate in resolving any disputes between employers and employees, where the disputes are apprenticeship related.

What is the role of the department?

The Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development appoints an Executive Director who:

- advises the Minister on matters covered by the Act
- carries out duties specifically assigned by the Act or regulations
- at the direction of the Minister, assists and advises the board in carrying out its duties and activities
- carries out responsibilities assigned by the Minister.

Department employees carry out responsibilities assigned to them in two major areas.

For the apprentice, they:

- arrange the formal instruction
- administer the apprenticeship examinations
- work with the training establishments to ensure that the apprentice's formal instruction proceeds smoothly
- make field calls to work sites, to talk about apprenticeship training, and to monitor the apprentice's training and progress
- keep records of the apprentice's contract and training progress
- process the apprentice's Record Book to document the completion of each period of apprenticeship
- document the completion of apprenticeship and issue the Alberta Journeyman Certificate.

With industry they:

- work with the PACs to develop the formal instruction that is delivered by the training establishments
- work with the PACs to develop examinations
- work with the PACs to develop trade regulations
- provide support to the LACs and to the PACs.

✓ role of Advanced Education and Career Development

✓ responsibilities to the apprentice

✓ responsibilities to industry

PRESENTATION

Hints

Presentations about Alberta's apprenticeship system may be necessary for:

- new and existing trade committee members
- instructors at training establishments
- employer and employee organizations
- other government department's staff.

Consider the audience when developing the message:

1. How much does the audience know about the apprenticeship system of training?
2. What level of detail of information is necessary: basic or advanced?
3. What background information about the audience or the occasion would be useful for developing the presentation?
4. What will the audience want to know?
5. Where will emphasis need to be placed?
6. What questions might the audience ask?
7. What is the allotted length of time for the presentation?
8. What other presentations will be made, on what topics?

Collect sufficient materials:

- TV/VCR
- flipchart with adequate paper, or whiteboard and appropriate markers
- masking tape, if using flipchart
- overhead projector, and an extra projector bulb, overhead transparencies, overhead transparency pens

Collect sufficient samples to illustrate the presentation:

- *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Division Application*
- *Contract of Apprenticeship*
- *Alberta Journeyman Certificate*
- Profiles of the trades
- Course Outlines
- Brochures and publications:
 - A Journey to Success: Apprenticeship Opportunities*
 - A Journey to Success: Apprenticeship Information for Employers*
 - Partnerships: Alberta's Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and Committee Structure*
 - Interprovincial Standard Canada: A passport to jobs in your trade*
 - The Alberta Journeyman Updating Program*
 - How Can I Help My Apprentice?* (Employment and Immigration Canada)
 - Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act and Regulations*
 - Alberta's Apprenticeship System: A Model of Excellence*

Develop speaking aids:

Outline the message, using questions or key points, on flipchart paper or overhead transparencies.

Before the presentation:

1. Make sure the meeting room is clearly marked. Post direction signs at the entrance, in hallways, and at elevators, if appropriate.
2. Arrive 15 - 30 minutes early:
 - check the equipment
 - arrange the room
 - set up the VCR. Run the video. Set the counter to zero when the program begins. Adjust the volume at a comfortable level. Rewind and cue the tape at zero.
 - set up the flipchart
 - set up the overhead projector and focus the transparencies
 - do a sound check - what speaking volume is necessary?
 - arrange the timing of the delivery of any refreshments that will be served, so that the presentation is not interrupted.
 - have some drinking water available.

While presenting:

1. Set the tone. Think of an interesting way to begin the presentation. Begin with a humorous and relevant anecdote, or a personal observation.
2. Use presentation notes only as a guide. Make flipcharts or overhead transparencies of the questions to be answered to guide the presentation. Answer the questions without reading the answers from the notes.
3. Get the audience involved in the presentation. Ask them questions. Let the audience know when their own questions would be appropriate: during the presentation or after.
4. Use easy to understand language. Avoid jargon or highly technical terms. Use short sentences.
5. Avoid nervous behavior such as shuffling paper, or playing with keys or the change in your pocket. Avoid saying "um" or "er".
6. Make eye contact with the audience. Look at the tops of their ears if looking directly at them is uncomfortable.

PRESENTATION

Outline

A short presentation that includes a video, message, and a question and answer period will require a minimum of an hour.

Part 1 • The Introduction:

Introduce yourself, as the speaker, or provide information to the host for the speaker's introduction. Two or three sentences is usually enough.

Introduce the presentation by briefly describing its purpose, components and length. Suggest when questions from the audience would be appropriate.

Part 2 • The Video:

Introduce the video as the first part of the presentation, by describing its purpose and giving more detail if appropriate:

The video, *Alberta's Apprenticeship System: A Model of Excellence*, gives basic facts about Alberta's apprenticeship system. It explains the apprenticeship system of training, and the partnership between industry and government.

The video uses two parallel stories to explain the partnership between industry and government. In alternating scenes, a narrator describes the apprenticeship model while using some of the same principles to help his family piece together a plastic model of a car. The video uses the analogy of building a model to demonstrate how the pieces of the Alberta apprenticeship system fit together.

The video also explains that Alberta apprenticeship is a training system which helps employers and employees compete effectively in a global economy.

The video outlines:

- the basic principles of the apprenticeship system of training
- the partnership structure between the department, the board and the committees
- the relationships of the partners
- the role of each partner in the development and delivery of apprenticeship training
- how industry's training needs are identified and converted to on-the-job and formal apprenticeship training.

At the end of the video, ask for comments or questions. The response of the audience can be used to lead into the presentation of the message.

Part 3 • The Message:

Use overhead transparencies with questions or points about the apprenticeship system as prompts. Use these prompts to organize the presentation and to keep on-track.

Decide in advance where samples like the Contract of Apprenticeship should be shown. Cue the use of samples by writing reminders in pencil on the flipchart paper. Or write cues on the opaque borders of the overhead transparencies.

Part 4 • Questions and Answers:

Questions may have been asked and answered earlier, but provide additional time at the end of the message specifically for the audience to ask more questions.

Part 5 • Closure:

Briefly summarize the points that were made during the presentation, including good points that were made by the audience.

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